

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 21, 2004. Claims 1-10 were pending. Claims 2, 9 and 10 have been withdrawn by the Patent Office from consideration. By this Amendment, Applicant has added new dependent claims 11-16. Support for new claims 11-16 can be found in the application at, for example, page 5, line 16, through page 6, line 28. Accordingly, claims 1-16 are now pending, with claim 1 being the sole claim in independent form.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application No. JP 10-329445 to Mori. Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori as applied to claims 1, 4, 5, 7 and 8, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,981,746 to Matsuo et al. Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Mori, and further in view of Japanese Patent Application No. JP 06135172 (Kobayashi).

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application is directed to a heat sensitive stencil sheet which has a porous resin layer provided on one side of a thermoplastic resin film, and a porous fiber layer bonded by an adhesive to the surface of the porous resin layer. In the heat sensitive stencil sheet of the claimed invention, the amount of the adhesive is 0.05-1.5 g/m², and the bonding strength between the porous resin layer and the porous fiber layer is 0.8-50.0 N/m.

By adjusting the adhesive amount and bonding strength in the above-mentioned ranges of the claimed invention, desirable printing durability, conveying smoothness and desirable image

quality can be attained (see Examples and Table 1-3 of the application).

The cited art does not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

Mori, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a heat-sensitive stencil sheet which comprises a thermosensitive film, a porous resin layer and a porous fiber layer disposed in this order. As the Office Action acknowledges, Mori does not disclose each and every feature of the claimed invention. In addition, the objects and functions of the heat-sensitive stencil sheet of Mori are different from those of the claimed invention.

The porous fiber layer of Mori is designed for being peeled off from the porous resin layer before printing (see Mori, abstract). Mori teaches peelability of the porous fiber layer.

In contrast, the claimed invention provides for the adhesive amount and bonding strength in the above-mentioned ranges in order to attain desirable printing durability, conveying smoothness and desirable image quality.

Applicant does not find any expression of concern in Mori with the adhesive amount and bonding strength for attaining desirable printing durability, conveying smoothness and desirable image quality. Therefore, Mori does not provide motivation for the adhesive amount and bonding strength in the ranges of the claimed invention.

Therefore, Mori not only fails to disclose the claimed invention, but also fails to render the claimed invention obvious, alone or when considered in combination with the other cited references.

Matsuo, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a heat sensitive stencil sheet consisting of a thermoplastic film and a porous support which are held together by an ionizing radiation curable adhesive layer.

Kobayashi, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a printing stencil paper structure

including a porous base material on thermoplastic resin, with an inorganic foaming agent dispersed in the thermoplastic agent.

However, Applicant finds no motivation in Matsuo or Kobayashi (nor in Mori) for a heat-sensitive stencil sheet having a porous resin layer provided on one side of a thermoplastic resin film, and a porous fiber layer bonded by an adhesive to the surface of the porous resin layer, wherein the amount of the adhesive ranges from 0.05 g/m^2 to 1.5 g/m^2 , and the bonding strength between the porous resin layer and the porous fiber layer ranges from 0.8 N/m to 50.0 N/m , as provided by independent claim 1.

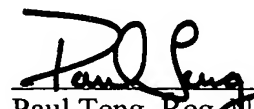
Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited references.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this response and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul Teng, Reg. No. 40,837
Attorney for Applicant
Cooper & Dunham LLP
Tel.: (212) 278-0400